



STENNIS SPACE CENTER

Early Education Monday Fact Sheet

Early Education Monday (EEM) is a program at NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center (SSC) specifically designed by Visitors Center personnel to enhance the awareness of space science in children ages 3 through 6. This education program seeks to motivate young children through the excitement of space adventure. EEM's goal is to introduce children to age-appropriate scientific and mathematical concepts.

The lively three-hour program includes hands-on activities as well as slide shows, stories and skits, all featuring NASA's Astronaut Bear Extraordinaire (ABE), Stennis Space Center's new mascot for EEM. The costumed character was conceived by an elementary school teacher, who was participating at Stennis in a summer education program, as a way to further inspire young students to learn more about space.

When the children arrive for Early Education Monday, Stennis tour guides talk with them about the history and future of NASA programs. The presentation is timed to accommodate the attention span of this age group. Next, ABE reads the children a story about a special trip he took into space. Tour guides then ask the children to travel with them on a mock adventure into space, beginning with the launch, continuing through life in orbit and ending with the landing of their vehicle.

Throughout the journey, Visitors Center personnel and ABE interact with the children using questions and demonstrations to keep their attention. During their mock adventure in space, children get a close look at a NASA space suit and are allowed to handle rocket and shuttle models. Before leaving Stennis, each child is given a packet of information containing such items as a coloring book, a mission sticker and an SSC balloon. ABE also presents each child a sample of three-flavored space ice cream. The program concludes with a tour of the exhibit museum and a bus tour of SSC's Space Shuttle Main Engine test complex. While at Stennis, teachers may visit the Teacher Resource Center and receive educational material geared toward the preschool/kindergarten level.

Interested preschool and kindergarten teachers should call to schedule their class to visit SSC on a specific Monday between September and May. Days other than Monday are also available for EEM by

special arrangement. For additional information or to make reservations for EEM, write or call the Stennis Space Center Visitors Center at (601) 688-2370.



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